

Free Report

Course: *Earth System Science (MSc)*, Institute of Physics and Meteorology, Faculty of Natural Sciences, University of Hohenheim

Duration of Master's studies: October 2014 – July 2017

Duration of exchange period: March 2017 – July 2017

University attended during exchange: Wageningen University and Research (WUR), Netherlands (periods 5 & 6)

When I heard of the ERASMUS+ mobility programme that offers students the opportunity to study at other European universities, I immediately applied. This opportunity is open for both EU and non-EU students. After applying online through the portal, it takes a few weeks for the university to make the selections. In due course of time, I heard back from the university offering me a place at Wageningen University and Research (WUR) in the Netherlands. I was very happy as it was my first choice of university when I had filled-in my application form. The next step was to then create a learning agreement where you fill-in the courses you want to take which has to be agreed upon by both the home and host university. After completion of this process, I was contacted directly by WUR with regards to further steps such as enrolling at the university and visa formalities (this was applicable in my case, as I am a non-EU citizen). The main person for contact and who is also responsible for you during your stay abroad is your exchange coordinator. Usually, any questions concerning the host institution can be directed to him/her. After these steps were completed, I was sent practical information about my studies at the university such as registering for courses, university life and also on how to find accommodation. Once all these arrangements were made, I was ready to begin my exchange period.

Courses at WUR are organized so that there are lectures/practical work every day. So one has to be prepared to spend the whole day at campus, from 8 am to around 5-6 pm in the evening with lunch break in between. WUR offers its students world-class facilities, with a modern campus, well-equipped for all of a student's needs, right from study places located all over the campus, providing students with a quiet and productive atmosphere, to cafes and restaurants located in all the main buildings, providing warm meals to keep you going through the day at university. I really enjoyed the intensive nature of the courses and I felt I learnt a lot during this time. The courses I took were a good mix of theory and practical work. Group work and assignments were part of the courses. The professors and student assistants were always around to answer your questions and to guide and facilitate your learning. The university also has a large and well-equipped library open throughout the day and till late at night (11 pm) which is very useful when you have to work on assignments or for studying in general. The university schedule can be demanding and take up most of your time but there's also a lot of social events taking places with many events such as talks, workshops, parties, cultural events, etc. There is something for everyone and there's always something interesting happening at the university.

The university is located in the small town of Wageningen which is a very international town due to the university which attracts students from all over the world. It has a small city centre with local markets twice a week, selling everything from fresh fruits and vegetables, famous

Dutch cheese, fish, meat to clothes and other useful things. For accommodation, I lived in university student housing called Droevendaal. It is made up of individual houses with up to six students living in each house. The unique aspect of living here is that most of the houses practice community living with shared responsibilities of taking care of the house, food, etc. It was a very good experience for me as I met people from all over the world and learnt about their culture, what they were studying and so on. The student accommodation was two minutes by bike, making it very convenient.

My overall experience during my stay abroad has been very good. I was very happy with the university right from the beginning with the efficient and fast administration which made it possible to get all the paper work done necessary to come and study here a very smooth process. The university itself is one of the best in the world and provides its students the best facilities for studying. The courses were engaging and made me feel motivated to learn and work for the course. The professors were always available and ready to help. The university offers many other activities such as the sports centre which offers over a hundred activities to keep you fit while you are studying in addition to various events and activities that are always taking place. There is never a dull moment and a lot to learn and enjoy always. Numerous student organisations hold regular workshops on a wide variety of topics, guest lectures and cultural events. I do not really have any bad experiences of my stay here and would strongly recommend studying abroad under the ERASMUS+ exchange programme to all students. It is a great opportunity to learn, make new friends, live in a new place and meet experts and professionals from your field thus expanding your network. I would like to thank both my home university and the host university for this invaluable experience.